



CITY OF DURHAM | DURHAM COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA



Date: April 16, 2012

To: Thomas W. Bonfield, Durham City Manager
Through: Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager
From: Steven L. Medlin, AICP, City-County Planning Director
Subject: Durham Comprehensive Plan Update

Summary. The *Durham Comprehensive Plan* sets out Durham's policies on how the City and County provide public facilities and services and guide growth in Durham. Projects and tasks identified in the Plan form the basis of the Planning Department's annual work plan and provide policy guidance to other County and City departments.

The *Durham Comprehensive Plan* was adopted by the Durham County Board of Commissioners and the Durham City Council in February 2005. Planning staff initiated a Plan update in September 2010. The primary purposes of the update are to define new projects and tasks to be accomplished over the next five years, revise policies in order to meet new conditions and directives of the elected officials, and to remove policies pertaining to projects and tasks that have been completed.

Recommendation. Staff recommends approval of the updated *Durham Comprehensive Plan*. The Durham City-County Planning Commission recommended approval on a 12-0 vote at its February 14, 2012 meeting.

Background. The *Durham Comprehensive Plan* serves as Durham's general policy statement about how it wishes to grow and develop. The Plan is "comprehensive" in that it covers all of the territory in the City's and the County's jurisdictions, and deals with all the physical aspects of the community's growth and development. The Plan defines how the City and County provide public facilities and services and guides new development. Plan policies are closely allied with the *Unified Development Ordinance* (UDO), and in many ways, the UDO is the regulatory extension of the *Durham Comprehensive Plan*.

The *Durham Comprehensive Plan* was adopted by the Durham County Board of Commissioners and the Durham City Council in February 2005. The 2005 Plan included 542 policies, many of which identified tasks and projects to be accomplished by the Planning Department and other County and City departments. These tasks and projects provide a basis for the Planning Department's annual work plan.

During the past six years, many of the tasks and projects identified by the *Durham Comprehensive Plan* have been completed. It has become necessary, therefore, to update the Plan by defining new projects and tasks to be accomplished by the Planning Department and other County and City departments over the next five years. Also, update of the Plan is necessitated by County and City priorities which have evolved as economic and market

conditions have changed. Additionally, some revisions are necessary to ensure that the Plan is consistent with other plans adopted by the City and County since 2005.

Planning staff initiated an update of the *Durham Comprehensive Plan* in September 2010. In late 2010, staff solicited the advice of other County and City departments concerning needed updates to the Plan. In addition, appointed boards, commissions, and committees were asked to provide comments and recommendations.

Staff created a project webpage that explained the project, provided background material, and provided a project schedule and public meeting announcements. Staff conducted a series of three public open houses in May-June 2011 to introduce the public to the project and request their input. During summer 2011, staff provided elected and appointed officials an opportunity to provide comments and recommendation through a series of on-line questionnaires. Comments and recommendations received from elected and appointed officials, county and city departments, and the public were then used by staff to craft an updated Comprehensive Plan.

The draft Plan update was presented to the Joint City-County Planning Committee (JCCPC) for review and comment at its meetings on September 7, 2011 and October 5, 2011. The recommendations of the JCCPC were incorporated into the draft Plan update. Staff presented the draft Plan update in a second series of three public open houses in November 2011. In December, the Plan was forwarded to County and City department directors for final review. Comments and recommendations received were incorporated into the draft Plan update.

Staff presented the *Durham Comprehensive Plan* update to the Durham Planning Commission on February 14, 2012. Planning Commission suggested one change to the draft plan and voted to recommend approval 12-0. Staff has incorporated Planning Commission's suggestion into the draft Plan forwarded to Council.

Alternatives. Council may adopt the updated *Durham Comprehensive Plan*, adopt the Plan with changes, or not adopt the updated Plan.

Issues. Staff, in consultation with the City of Durham's Attorney's office, determined that any change to Durham's Future Land Use Map proposed in an update of the *Durham Comprehensive Plan* would have to follow public notice requirements for Plan amendments established by the Unified Development Ordinance. Staff has proposed no amendments to the Future Land Use Map through this update of the *Durham Comprehensive Plan*.

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Attachment 1: Draft Comprehensive Plan Update, mark-up version

Attachment 2: Resolution

If you need clean copy of the Plan update, please contact the Planning Department. A clean copy is also available on-line at [http://durhamnc.gov/ich/cb/ccpd/Pages/Durham-Comprehensive-Plan-\(Fall-2011-Update\).aspx](http://durhamnc.gov/ich/cb/ccpd/Pages/Durham-Comprehensive-Plan-(Fall-2011-Update).aspx)